

Greensted Junior School

Kirby Road, Basildon, SS14 1RX

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although standards are improving, they are not high enough in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress across the school has not been consistently strong and fewer pupils than nationally make the progress they should.
- Senior leaders' work to improve teaching and pupils' progress is at a relatively early stage.
- Too little teaching has been good in the past and so, until this year, some pupils have not made enough progress.
- There are still inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching in helping pupils to think deeply about their learning and in developing their skills.
- Pupils are sometimes given work that is either too hard or too easy for them.
- Subject leaders do not have enough influence on improving teaching and raising achievement.
- Governors have supported the headteacher in her push to drive up standards but have not asked sufficiently challenging questions about pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of what the school needs to do next to improve further.
- Marking and feedback are helping pupils to understand how they can improve their work and reach higher standards.
- Reading is taught well, and this is reflected in the good progress most pupils are now making in their reading.
- Relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils feel safe in school. They attend regularly and behave well.
- Pupils experience and enjoy a variety of activities, events and school trips.
- Parents speak highly of the school. They say that teachers are approachable and 'They really care.'

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They visited 19 lessons or parts of lessons, including one seen jointly with the headteacher. They observed small-group 'catch-up' sessions led by teaching assistants.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and classroom displays. They listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and talked to pupils during lessons, in the playground, in the lunch hall, and as they moved around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and governors. Inspectors also gathered views from the headteacher of the sponsor academy.
- Inspectors took account of the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke informally with parents and carers at the start of the day.
- Questionnaires completed by members of staff were taken into consideration.
- A wide range of school documents were reviewed. These included development plans, policies, the school's own judgement of its strengths and weaknesses, various monitoring, safeguarding and planning records, information for families, and governing body documents.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynne Thorogood

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greensted Junior School is a smaller-than-average junior school.
- The school became a sponsor-led academy in August 2012 and a new headteacher was appointed at this time.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by making sure that teachers:
 - share the good practice that exists within the school
 - set work that is suitably challenging for pupils of different abilities
 - develop and extend pupils' learning and understanding; for example, through skilful questioning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by making sure that:
 - subject leaders develop their roles in improving the quality of teaching and achievement in the school
 - the governing body builds on its recent efforts to hold the school to account for the impact of its work.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Pupils in Year 6 in 2013 left the school around six months behind pupils nationally. Standards are improving and pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve in line with national averages in the end-of-year national tests. Pupils make average and often good progress from their starting points, as measured by the school at the start of Year 3.
- Rates of progress are inconsistent as pupils move through year groups. This has been because of some inadequate teaching which the headteacher has now eradicated. Although many pupils are now making good or better progress, this is not yet consistent in all classes and in all subjects. In particular, progress in mathematics varies across the school. This is because there have been gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in this subject.
- Progress requires improvement because there are times when pupils' work is too hard or too easy and their mistakes or misunderstandings are not picked up quickly enough. For example, in a lower school mathematics lesson on working out the area of rectangles, the more-able pupils were going over learning which they were already very confident with while the least-able pupils struggled with a task which was too difficult for them.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in lessons where they are given tasks that stretch them but in some lessons they are set work that is too easy for them.
- Pupils across the school are making good progress in their reading because of the good teaching they have received over the past year.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress. In 2013, eligible pupils left the school achieving standards which were similar to that of their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Progress of disabled pupils and those with a statement of special educational needs is generally good because of the high-quality teaching and support they receive from staff in the school. Progress varies for other pupils with special educational needs.
- Primary sports funding has paid for specialist sports coaches and equipment. Pupils report that they greatly enjoy the after-school sports clubs. The coaching has had an impact on pupils' behaviour, self-esteem and attitudes to school, which are now very positive. Pupils show good awareness of how physical education helps them to stay fit and healthy.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it has not helped pupils to achieve well enough since 2012 in reading, writing and mathematics. There are examples of good teaching and good progress within the school but these are not yet consistent in all year groups and all subjects.
- Tasks and activities are sometimes too hard or too easy for pupils to complete. When tasks are too easy, pupils repeat what they already know rather than extend their learning. When tasks are too hard they struggle, often without the help of a teacher or teaching assistant.
- Teaching assistants generally support lower attaining pupils well in lessons. However, this

sometimes limits pupils' experience of being successful working on their own, especially when the work is too difficult for them. An example of this was observed in a lower school writing lesson. Lower attaining pupils were given a similar task to their classmates. They made little progress during the session because the task was too difficult for them and the adult felt obliged to do most of the work for these pupils.

- In some classes, teachers do not develop pupils' thinking deeply enough or extend their learning. They are too easily satisfied with pupils' sometimes superficial answers to questions and they do not probe pupils' understanding more forensically.
- When teaching is more effective, teachers set work at the right level for different groups of pupils, which enables them to work with confidence. This was seen in some reading sessions, for example. In these lessons, teachers are aware how pupils are getting on, and act promptly to deal with any misconceptions.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to children about their work is consistently good throughout the school. Pupils are told very clearly what their next steps in learning are and they are set targets which ensure that there is a constant focus on raising standards. Pupils respond to marking well and improve their work as a result of it. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite.
- A warm smell of toast greets pupils who attend the popular breakfast club. Pupils of all ages chat and play happily together in a caring environment.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are almost always good. They work hard and enjoy lessons. Minor disruption is rare, and dealt with swiftly by teachers and teaching assistants.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. School records show that the number of incidents of bullying or poor behaviour have reduced significantly since 2012 when the school opened. There has been a consistent and relentless drive to improve behaviour by all staff and governors.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that 'teachers really care' about them. There are warm relationships between pupils and all the adults in the school. In the lunch hall, adults and children eat and chat together. There is a sense of family and community.
- All staff have worked to improve attendance, which is now slightly above average. The number of pupils who miss a lot of school has significantly reduced this year. This all reflects how much pupils enjoy going to school.
- Most of the responses to the online survey Parent View were positive. The school's own recent parental survey was also very positive. All the parents who spoke with the inspectors praised the school and felt that their children were happy and safe.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Subject leaders carry out their responsibilities with enthusiasm. They know what they need to do to improve and they carry out a range of activities so that they can check on the impact of

teaching on pupils' progress. However, they are still new to their roles and are still developing their expertise in checking the quality of teaching and in showing teachers how to improve their teaching further.

- The leadership of the headteacher has led to improvements in behaviour, attendance, teaching and achievement. The leadership team and governors share her strong commitment to improve the school. All leaders understand the school's priorities and are working to develop teaching further. The headteacher checks staff performance closely and makes sure that targets for improvement are focused on pupils' achievement.
 - Because leaders have established a clear focus on improving teaching in the school, all teachers are responsive to suggestions on how to improve.
 - The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is shown in the support given to pupils eligible for the pupil premium and to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school ensures that they are all included in whole-class activities and are able to take part in the activities their classmates enjoy.
 - Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively throughout the school through the range of subjects and topics on offer as well as through assemblies. For example, Year 3 pupils enjoy their topic on India. They learn about Hinduism, they create Indian collages with a range of materials and they explore Indian myths and legends through drama and role play. Pupils also enjoy visits outside of school, linked to their topics.
 - Leaders and teachers receive good support and advice from the academy sponsor, which is helping to build capacity for further improvements within the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors visit the school regularly and keep records of their visits and of the recommendations that they make to the school. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for improvement and are developing their understanding of the quality of teaching and the standards pupils reach. They have established that teachers' pay rise must be tied to the progress their pupils make. However, governors have not asked sufficiently challenging questions to investigate why standards were low and progress disappointing in 2013.
 - The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met regarding safeguarding, the management of staff performance and financial management, including the additional funding for sport and the pupil premium. They know about the impact of this spending.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138604
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	440103

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Craig O’Callaghan
Headteacher	Melanie Gaskin
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01268 553359
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